1:Franken et al M, G-5 (ca. 1913-1958) 1960
OF7 Balinese OF7

The Position of the Blacksmiths

Recently the gild of blacksmiths on Bali, the *pande wĕsi*, has been in the news again, and it occurred to me that it might be desirable to recount something of the history of the group's social evolution. Leaving the special nature of the present difficulties completely out of consideration here, I shall restrict myself to a general historical survey of the position of the *pande wĕsi* as a group. 326

As early as 1905 Van Ossenbruggen pointed out that on Bali the smiths, and everyone who worked in metal, which is highly magical in significance, were themselves magically dangerous personalities.[1] A decade later this same eminent scholar of *adat* law, in a trailblazing article, considered the question anew in the general context of magically dangerous objects and crafts.[2] Further important data on the smiths and other craftsmen on Bali were collected by the *controleur* De Kat Angelino.[3] 326 114

To trace the development of relationships between the smiths and the *puri* or *kraton* of the ruler in nascent Hindu-Javanese (and later Hindu-Javanese Balinese) society, however, the Old Javanese epigraphs, inscriptions in stone and bronze, are of extremely great importance. Stutterheim pointed this out in an excellent article on various functionaries, officials, and craftsmen who enjoyed special incomes from the ruler's *puri*, at the same time demonstrating the magic significance of some of them as it appears in the epigraphs.[4]

An extensive comparative study which I have made has convinced me that these official documents of early Java are the best sources of information regarding the development of Hindu-Javanese (and later Hindu-Balinese) society, hence also regarding the aspect of that society under consideration here.

[P. 291]

1:Franken et al M, G-5 (ca. 1913-1948)1960
OF7 Balinese OF7

326 114 These authentic documents, which do not represent a traditional historiography such as is contained in the *lontar* literature, but reflect with documentary reliability the actual conditions at the time of their dating, demonstrate that before the arrival of Hindu culture on Java and Bali the *desa* was the political unit. All traditional indigenous power was vested in the *desa* authorities. And in the *desa* the smiths (including the blacksmiths, coppersmiths, and goldsmiths) were among the important craftsmen represented by an *ĕmpu*, a 'master' (smith).

463 823 565 This is true on Bali even today; specific functions in the village community are still performed by members of specific classes: *pasĕk*, *kĕbayan*, *pande*, and so forth.[5] All metal was and is considered by Indonesians as magically dangerous, magically 'charged', and anyone who desires to be in daily contact with it must himself have magic power at his disposal, since otherwise there are great risks involved. For this reason the smiths constituted a separate genealogical group in which not only the technique of forging was kept secret but certain magical craft usages were retained – usages in connection both with the initiation of apprentice-sons and with the tools of the trade, which on Bali even today may only be used after certain *mantras* have been recited. De Kat Angelino published these *mantras* in his instructive study,[6] and I have also found them listed in the 'codex of the smiths', the *Prasasti Sira Pande Ĕmpu*, to which I shall return below.

326 643 With the establishment and expansion of royal authority, and hand in hand with it that of the priests, who were also made members of the judiciary newly instituted after the Hindu model – in a word, with the rise and development of the Hindu-Javanese state, – it goes without saying that the older crafts and social forces were driven into the background.

Despite the Hinduism which he officially professed, however, the early Javanese or Balinese ruler was Indonesian to the core, and the magic power of the *pande wĕsi* was just as real to him as to every other Javanese or Balinese. In order not to turn that magic power against it, but rather in its favour, it seemed to the court group (the ruler and the priests, each with a vast host of subordi-

1:Franken et al M, G-5 (ca. 1913-1958) 1960
OF7 Balinese OF7

nates) to be the best policy to attach the magic force to the *puri* or *kraton*. The epigraphs present a clear picture of a constantly increasing dependence of these crafts on the palace, the symbol of the Hindu-Javanese state. This was all the more desirable since they had traditionally enjoyed great prestige.

This is perhaps a proper place to touch on the question of the *sudras*, since it is a very important matter not only as regards the smiths, but also in connection with various other groups that have repeatedly given trouble to the Dutch authorities on Bali. I need only recall the *bujangga* or *sĕngguhu* affair in Mĕngwi. Lekkerkerker[7] and later Korn[8] pointed out in their dissertations that the use of the *agamas* or Hindu-Balinese law books by the Courts of Kĕrta in their adjudications is largely legal fiction. The same thing is true as regards the three-caste (*triwangsa*) system. In both cases canon law from elsewhere has nominally been retained and applied, while in actuality social relations on Bali have continued to be governed by traditional *adat* concepts. The relation between *adat* law and Hindu canon law in early Java and present-day Bali might well be compared to that between early Germanic law and Christian canon law in medieval Europe.

A few further comments on the *triwangsa* system may be appropriate at this point.[9] In the homeland of Hindûism the caste system was a stratification imposed on the conquered autochthonous population by the Aryans; on Bali it was perhaps a system imported from the Javanese realm of Majapahit. Up to the present no data have been found regarding a *triwangsa* structure on Bali before the Majapahit period, or at least before the beginning of Javanese influence during the reign of Erlangga in the early eleventh century.[10] The Majapahit influence – which does not date merely from the fall of Majapahit, thus in the late fifteenth century, but was strong from the time of Ayam Wuruk's reign, that is to say since around 1350 – transformed the direct Hindu-Balinism which had preceded it into a Hindu-Javanese Balinism.

In the *triwangsa* system the first caste was that of the Brahmins, from whose families the *pĕdandas* came. The second caste was that

1:Franken et al M, G-5 (ca. 1913-1958) 1960
OF7 Balinese OF7

vaunted themselves into the *triwangsa* may haughtily refer to them as such, but all Balinese, including members of the *triwangsa*, recognize the existence of many different groups such as the *pasĕks*, the *bĕndesas*, and the *pulosaris* within this multitude.[14] Some of these groups, such as the *bujanggas* and the *sĕngguhus* and the people of the *desa* of Tĕnganan on the border of the *Bali-aga*, have customs that are deviant in cer ain aspects. In this connection reference may also be made to the group of the *mĕsiwa raga*, who have their own holy water, yet may be buried in the general graveyard and may be cremated. (It should also be pointed out that many 'ordinary' Hindu-Balinese do not obtain their holy water for cremation from the *pĕdanda Brahma*, but from the *pĕmangku* of the *pura dalĕm*, the guardian of the temple of the dead; such people are called *mĕsiwa kĕ dalĕm*.)

One of these separate groups is that of the *pande wĕsi*. In the course of the centuries this group has to all appearances largely accepted *triwangsa* usages in its ritual. Never completely, however, or at least never without a vivid awareness that it had older rights than the Brahmins coming from Java. In some *desas* the blacksmiths have their own temples and graveyards; in others they have become an integral part of the *desa* community, even in its Hindu-Javanese configuration.

Here I should like to report something of their *Prasasti Sira Pande Empu*, a résumé of which is given in the appendix below. The codification of literature, of whatever sort, is a Hindu phenomenon on Java and Bali. First the Hindu writings were copied out, then provided with a commentary, and in a later stage rewritten in a form adapted to Indonesian circumstances, but eventually purely Indonesian literature, which until then had been preserved in oral tradition, was also recorded. Hence the *pande wĕsi* codified their tradition in the Gelgel period, thus after 1400. Their *prasasti* is, in its present form, a Hindu-Javanese product in appearance and structure. Essential parts of it, however, are purely Indonesian.

As regards structure, the work begins with an account of creation, or a cosmogony. In content this account deviates from the usual cosmogonies in allowing the whole world to be formed from

1:Franken et al M, G-5 (ca. 1913-1948)1960
OF7 Balinese OF7

773 326 Brahma, who is very clearly not the Brahma of early Hinduism, but the fire god. As an intermediary figure between Brahma and 564 565 the *pande wĕsi* appears Ĕmpu Pradah, in the *prasasti* a mythological figure who has only his name in common with the historical Mpu Bharāḍa of Erlangga's reign (*circa* 1040). It is Ĕmpu Pradah who provides the smiths with their holy water.

Then follow a great number of *mantras*, both for the tools used in forging and for the ritual of the dead, which is described at length. The chief *mantra*, called *sundari bungkah*, is definitely a new fabrication the notion of which must be attributed to partial knowledge of the *mantra* books of the *pĕdandas:* the combination of letters in it cannot even be pronounced, let alone that it might have any lexical significance. It is neither indigenous nor Hindu.

565 326 As regards the essential characteristics of the *prasasti*, the most significant thing is the central place of Fire, the god of the smiths. Also of importance is the use of certain formulas which are of Indonesian origin rather than Hindu and which also occur in the age-old purification rites, the similarly pre-Hindu *ruwat* or *lukat* formulas.

In its present form, however, the *prasasti* as a whole is so much a Hindu-Javanese work and so permeated by general Hindu conceptions that on the basis of its contents I would consider it an imitation of the customary *tutur* literature which was dictated by the needs of the times. The *pande wĕsi*, hard-pressed for centuries, will have felt that, in order to maintain their own position, it would be best to imitate the general type of religious book, combining a cosmogony and ritual prescripts. As early as 1878 Van Eck commented:

> It is curious to hear the tales that have been and are being invented to demonstrate clearly and obviously that one actually is of Majapahit descent ...[14]

Korn similarly states:

> Hence the classes mentioned above [including the *pande wĕsi*], in order to escape being grouped among ordinary *sudras*, have felt called upon to demonstrate by means of genealogies, *pĕmĕnchangahs*, *prasastis*, and *babads* that they are of divine origin ...[15]

1:Franken et al M, G-5 (ca. 1913-1958) 1960
OF7 Balinese OF7

There is so little of the pre-Hindu tradition of the *pande wĕsi* included in this *prasasti* that in our eyes it would seem a pretty weak argument to their advantage. However, on taking into consideration the time of writing one can conclude from the compilation of such a *lontar* that the *pande wĕsi* had no desire to be completely absorbed into Hindu-Javanese society on Bali, but wished to claim a special place for themselves.

By composing such a *lontar* and even more by using the general structure of the books of the *pĕdandas* and borrowing a great deal of *mantra* material from them, the *pande wĕsi* acted in keeping with the demands of the age between 1400 and 1900. This was the only sort of evidence that was valued by the Hindu-Balinese public. If the blacksmiths had said 'We are pre-Hindu', they would have been boycotted instead of retaining their special place in society. Hence they reasoned: 'We, too, are descendants of Brahma and Pradah, and Brahma, in his incarnation as Pradah, gave us the oldest rights.'

1:Franken et al M, G-5 (ca. 1913-1948)1960
OF7 Balinese OF7

Appendix

Précis of a Lontar Used by the Blacksmiths

326 564 The opening of the *Prasasti Sira Pande Ĕmpu* provides a cosmogony of the type such as is usually to be found in other *tuturs* or mystical writings. The chief difference is that in this *lontar* Batara Brahma is assigned a more important rôle. Here, [372 776] however, Brahma is not to be conceived of in his traditional Hindu significance, but as lord of the fire. This conception of Brahma as equivalent to *agni* or fire corresponds completely with that of the people of Tĕnggĕr, and in fact various *mantras* show a great similarity to the *ruwat mantras* of the Tĕnggĕrese.[1]

From Brahma's asceticism arises Ĕmpu Pradah. In the *lontar* the figure has become completely mythological, a phenomenon of the Gelgel period (from 1350 onwards). There is not a trace of the historical Mpu Bharāḍa and his journey to Bali during the reign of King Erlangga. Other figures such as Sang Hyang Taya[2] point towards the later stage of mystical literature,[3] the so-called pre-Moslem Javanism stemming from the period after the heyday of Majapahit, thus after 1350. In this *lontar* there are also late Gelgel (hence Javanized Hindu-Balinese) notions regarding Majapahit and similar matters.

Ĕmpu Pradah is made the first lord of the gild of the smiths. Then it is pointed out that all sorts of weapons, agricultural tools, and the like are made by the smiths, and that these objects are used by everyone, including the Brahmins (for example creeses). The smiths are able to make such objects because of their magic power, their *sakti*, which is concentrated in their basic *mantra*, the *sundari bungkah*.

According to the *lontar* the Brahmins acquired all their wisdom and their knowledge of ritual from the smiths. Smiths are also in every respect more than the *wiku*, the lords spiritual of whatever

l:Franken et al M, G-5 (ca. 1913-1958) 1960
OF7 Balinese OF7

origin who practise asceticism, often living in monasteries.[4] Since the *pande wĕsi* are in every way more ancient than the Brahmins they are of course not permitted to follow the newer, Brahmanic rite, hence also not to use Brahmanic holy water. 326 564

There is an explicit warning, also for other persons who are not members of the *triwangsa*, against following the usages of Brahmins and of rulers or *ksatriyas*. It is noteworthy that reference is not made to a *triwangsa–sudra* antithesis, but to one of various sorts of craftsmen over against Brahman priests and noble lords (*ratus*, *punggawas*, and other *ksatriyas*).

It is also worthy of note that for cases of such unlawful following of rituals meant for other groups Sĕmar acts as judge, for Sĕmar is a purely pre-Hindu Javanese figure, probably an old deity who later obtained a more subordinate place in the newer Hindu system. Still considered as 'older than the gods', he has a separate altar in many Balinese temples.

After this account follow extensive and detailed regulations of the way in which the *pande wĕsi* are to perform their ritual of the dead. In it there are a great many Sanskrit *mantras* also known from the liturgies of the *pĕdandas*. Besides such *mantras* there are also *mantras*, likewise in Sanskrit, for the various forging tools.[1]

In the cosmogonical and historical section the *Prasasti Sira Pande Ĕmpu* is very repetitive.

2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

ritories. There, even today, live the conservative old-fashioned Balinese, entrenched against the landlords, regarding them as intruders. In these villages the Hindu castes are not recognized and the descendants of the primitive aristocracy proudly retain their titles and their authority. At the top of the long list of native ranks are the *pasek* and the *bandesa*, the heads of the two central institutions of the old-style community: the temple of "origin," and the assembly hall, ritually belonging to the "right" and "left." I was told that a girl of these castes who marries a man of the Hindu aristocracy is publicly renounced by her family and spiritually "thrown out" of the village. Also held in respect are the blacksmiths, a caste in themselves, *pandé*, the ancient fire-priests who made the magic krisses, symbol of the family's virility. Even Brahmanas, highest among all classes, must use the high language when addressing a *pandé* who has his tools in his hands.

In the tributary districts the natives co-ordinated their castes with those of the new nobility, in a great scale of ranks that have now become so muddled through intermarriage that they appear confused even to the Balinese themselves. The original castes still remain as subdivisions of the fourth and lowest of the Hindu castes, the Sudras, who constitute about ninety-three per cent of the population of Bali.

The Hindu-Balinese nobility is divided into the three well-known groups: the priests, Brahmanas (Brahmins of India); the ruling royalty, Satrias (Ksatriyas); and the military class, Wesias (Vesiya). They are supposed to originate directly from the gods. According to the legends, the Brahmanas sprang out of the mouth of Brahma, the Satria from his arms, and the Wesia from his feet. Perhaps the reason why the common people look upon their nobility with such respect is that they have still an unshaken belief in their divine origin. The true Balinese religion consists mainly in the worship of the family ancestors, with the patriarch-founder of the village as the communal god. Thus it was easy for the conquerors to establish their own dead kings as ancestral gods, since they, too, descended from canonized kings and holy

2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

djago and is the garment of magic characters such as Bhima, Twalén, and Merdah.

Although not a part of the weaving art, the gilt cloth (*kamben prada*) used for theatrical performances is also important. This is coloured silk boldly patterned with applications of pure goldleaf (*prada*) glued onto the fabric with Chinese gelatine (*antjur*) by a special process. It is curious that despite the fact that every Balinese wears Javanese *batik* for everyday dress, there is no evidence of their having adopted this popular process of decorating cloth. I have found strange *batiks* in a rough hand-woven cotton of a non-Javanese style, but I could never discover proof that they were made in Bali.

The Balinese also excel in the art of working metals, from the simple agricultural implements of iron, the parts of musical instruments, and the accessories of priests (bells, incense-burners, lamps, tripods, and so forth) cast in brass, to the extravagant gold and silver platters (*lelantjang*), water-bottles (*kendíh*), and vases (*sangkú* and *batil*), the knives and scissors for cutting betel-nut (*tjaket*) of wrought iron inlaid in silver, and the rich and elaborate rings, bracelets, ear-plugs, and flowers for the hair in hammered and chiselled gold set with rubies and star sapphires.

But the most important examples of Balinese craftsmanship are their krisses, the famous weapons of important Indonesian men, nowadays worn only as symbols and as ornaments. An inherited kris that has descended in a family for generations becomes not only their most important heirloom, but also the tangible part of the family deity and has come actually to be worshipped as an ancestral god, a *batara kawitan*, in whom the magic strength of the forefathers continues to live. Thus the head of a prominent Balinese family regards his kris as an important appendage and a symbol of himself. Today in the old villages it is compulsory for every man to wear his kris to attend a meeting; the kris must be worn at marriage and for all ceremonial or state occasions. Whoever cannot appear in person, sends his

2: Covarrubias R-5 (1930-1933) 1938
OF7 Bali OF7

The blacksmiths, makers of krisses, belong to a special caste, the *pandé*, aristocrats among the lower classes who worship the fiery volcano Batur and are regarded as powerful magicians who understand the handling of iron and fire, two elements held in reverence since earliest times. The distinguished *pandés* are even respected by the proud Brahmanas, who consider themselves the highest form of humanity, and who are required to address a *pandé* in the high language when the smith has his tools in his hands. It is said (according to Korn) that a *pandé*

Blacksmiths at Work (*from a Balinese manuscript*)

who engaged a Brahmanic priest to officiate for him ("took holy water from a Brahmana") would lose his "*pandé* power" (*kepandean*) and might even become a monkey.

There are many popular beliefs concerning the life and power of krisses. It is said that a witch-doctor, through trance, can communicate with the spirit of a given kris and learn its past history. It is also believed that the strange fascination that a kris has on certain individuals is the cause of the temporary madness of a man who runs amuck (*amok*). He is not responsible for his acts because he is compelled by a bloodthirsty kris to run wild, killing people. Often ancestral krisses are held to have come from the heavens as a gift from the gods, and these krisses are powerful amulets against all sorts of calamities. In Ubud I was told of a man who fell asleep under an old *waringin* tree and dreamed that the spirit of the tree ordered him to cut certain roots for an offering. Imbedded among the roots, he found an old kris blade. Afraid to keep it, he turned it over to the feudal

9:Geertz E-5 (1957-1958)1959 OF7 Bali OF7

621 634 which the name village can be properly applied, while the perbekelan as a whole forms only the vaguest of social units. The three villages concerned are Pau, Penasan, and Tihingan proper (the seat of the Perbekel which, consequently, lends its name to the entire perbekelan). We shall be concerned here only with Tihingan proper.

Tihingan proper consists of a single hamlet of some 138 kitchens grouped into 85 house-compounds, and there is but one set of Kahyangan-Tiga temples [794] to which all members of the hamlet belong, a rather untypically simple arrangement. There is a Brahmana priest living in the village, and there is a [564] scattering of low-title Satria and Vesia families, but almost 90 percent of the population is Sudra. From the structural point of view, however, the most 621 striking characteristic of Tihingan is neither its territorial pattern nor its status 614 system, but the rather unusual importance of kinship as an organizational force in social life. It is the four dadia, accounting for nearly 80 percent of the village population, which form the axis around which Tihingan village life mainly revolves; and the implications of this simple fact can be traced through all the levels of its social organization. On the religious level, each major dadia [794] owns a very large, handsomely carved temple (in the case of the two largest dadia, even larger and more handsomely carved than the theoretically superordinate Kahyangan-Tiga temples) near the center of the village. The upkeep of this temple and the carrying out of the requisite semi-annual ceremonies within it in suitable style are among the major functions of the dadia, and rivalries in those matters can become quite intense.

At the political level, the distribution of hamlet leadership roles is con- [623] sciously and carefully designed to provide a realistic reflection of the balance of [634] dadia power. There are five klian or chiefs. Four of these are chosen, one from each of the major dadia; the fifth klian at the same time holds the office of Pengliman and is a member of the second largest dadia. Since the Perbekel himself, a man of some weight within Tihingan proper, is a member of the largest dadia, the kin group foundation for local leadership is clear and exact. Further, in supra-village political processes, institutionalized in the party sys- [665] tem of the "New Indonesia," the two largest kin groups are allied as a faction against the next two plus all the families not belonging to a dadia. All of the first group belong to the Socialist party and all of the second to the Nationalist, so that party allegiance is absolutely predictable from kin group membership, and reflects the internal organization of the village rather than personal ideological conviction.

On the economic level, each dadia forms a cooperative work group for the 621 manufacture of Balinese musical instruments—metallaphones, gongs, cymbals, 614 etc.—a smithing craft in which this village is partially specialized; the person- 476 nel working in any given forge almost inevitably are members of the same [326] dadia.[10] Further, most tenancy and exchange work patterns in rice field culti- [243] vation also follow kin group lines, introducing these alliances into the irrigation society context as well. More informal economic relationships—money lending, patronage, and so on—follow the same pattern.

Atjehnese OD4
Makassar OG6
Bali OF7

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[577 cont.]
among the Atjehnese. Wrapping a copper leg-ring with a gold alloy is done as follows: "A piece of soeasa is flattened by being repeatedly heated and then suddenly immersed in cold water until it has the proper form to be wrapped completely around the copper base which is first well moistened with a mixture of finely pounded borax and water. The sheet of soeasa is pressed tightly against the copper and is then bound all around with a cord to make it as nearly as possible the same shape as the copper. The whole is now quickly immersed in a mixture of borax and water, after which it is placed in a little fire of glowing coals. As soon as the workman sees any flowing of the metal, he pours a little water over the article to cool it. The irregularities in the soeasa are then beaten out with an iron hammer on an anvil. The heating and cooling are repeated until the process is finished" (1).

1. Loebèr, op. cit., p. 65.

A
M
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[326]

The actual technique employed by the goldsmith and silversmith is much the same as in Europe. Fine chased work is done in various areas of the archipelago (Bali, southern Celebes, Atjeh). Beautiful bowls are to be seen, for example, on Bali, but the gold and silver covering of the kris sheaths in particular are outstanding here.

Filigree or kantille work is preferred for silver.

Filigree work is done in many areas, but the land for it is the Padang Highlands. All kinds of miniature furniture are made for the European collector, but the native work is found on the lids of bamboo tubes and on the ornaments worn by the women.

To obtain the necessary wire, the metal is drawn out as thin as possible and then pulled through ever smaller holes in an iron draw-board until the desired size is obtained.

To make the article, the wires are cut to the required length, bent to proper form, and [578] arranged, after which